

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Halcyon Products

#### Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership

#### Halcyon Products, Inc. Brings New Product to Market

##### Client Profile:

Halcyon Products, Inc. manufactures high-quality, innovative products that improve safety and promote job efficiency for the first responder, such as for the fire and EMS, law enforcement, military and sports industries. The company employs 5 people at its facility in Chagrin Falls, Ohio.

##### Situation:

When firefighters need to get out of a smoke-filled building, standard operating procedure would be to follow the hose to find their way out. However, sometimes they couldn't find the hose, or they followed the hose in the wrong direction, with tragic results. Steve Nash, a veteran firefighter, and John Moore, an experienced strategic marketer, had an idea for a FireGround Compass, a hand-held, illuminated device designed for navigation within the fire ground. Recognizing they needed engineering and product development assistance, Nash and Moore contacted CAMP services, an office in Ohio affiliated with the Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership (OMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, and a division of the Manufacturing Advocacy & Growth Network (MAGNET).

##### Solution:

MAGNET helped Halcyon Products win seed funding from the Cuyahoga County New Product Development and Entrepreneurship Loan Program. Next, MAGNET's Product Design & Development (PDD) team helped Nash and Moore brainstorm the FireGround Compass design and engineering parameters. Working with Pro-E CAD software, Mike Keller, Senior Product Engineer, prepared preliminary concept drawings and final assembly drawings. The PDD team also helped Halcyon research and select vendors for sourcing and assembly of 140 working beta-unit prototypes. Then, Halcyon Products conducted the first of many focus groups on the product concept, and the enthusiastic consensus at the Fire Department Instructors Officers meeting in Orlando, Florida, was that the FireGround Compass should become required equipment. "One officer told us he followed the hose line three times and kept ending up at the nozzle," says Moore. "He said this [product] would've turned him in the right direction. Another fire chief told us his department lost two men last year to just this kind of situation. If they'd had the FireGround Compass, they might've gotten out without injury." Halcyon sent the prototypes to 70 fire departments around the country for testing. The results helped Halcyon and PDD make additional refinements and improvements in the design. Encouraged by the positive test results, Halcyon Products applied for a contract with the Department of Homeland Security's TechSolutions program. In February 2008 the company won a research and development project to produce 200 beta units that were tested by dozens of fire departments across the U.S. and at Eastern Kentucky University. In mid-2008, the company went into production and began shipping units to the market. The company sold several hundred units in the first few weeks of production and projects sales of \$50,000 by the end of 2008.

Halcyon is implementing an aggressive sales plan targeting all 1.2 million firefighters in the U.S. In April 2009, the company will officially launch the FireGround Compass at the industry's largest

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conference and expo--the Fire Department Instructors Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana. In addition, as a result of MAGNET's assistance in implementing the successful research and development program, the company will be introducing other new products at the expo.

#### **Results:**

- \* Estimated sales of \$50,000 in 2008 and additional sales of \$250,000 to \$300,000 in 2009.
- \* Increased investment in business by \$430,000.
- \* Created 5 jobs.

#### **Testimonial:**

"Steve and I did not know anything about the new product process design through production. The MAGNET Product Design & Development team educated us step-by-step. Now I feel much more confident about the next product we're planning to develop."

John Moore, President